



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS

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November 9, 2004

The Honorable Mark R. Warner  
Governor of Virginia

Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor Warner:

On November 2, 2004, almost 3.2 million Virginians went to the polls to vote. Our Election Day was largely trouble-free, in no small measure due to the support provided to the State Board of Elections (SBE) by the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA). This support was amazing for its scope. Here are just some examples of how VITA made a difference in this election:

- ▶ Beginning about a year ago, VITA's telecommunications staff assisted us in procuring a new phone system to meet, in part, the mandates of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). Doug Leslie (a VITA employee) was with us throughout the process, holding the vendor accountable. A week before the election, we met with Doug Leslie and the vendor and decided to add eight more lines to handle the anticipated volume. Due to superb cooperation among VITA, Verizon and the vendor, the lines were installed and the system reconfigured in just three days. The new system allowed us to field almost 10,000 calls over the period November 1-2.
- ▶ Our Enterprise Service Director (ESD), Dee Piscicella, corralled everyone at VITA that could remotely "touch" SBE and provided us with an Election Day Contingency Plan. This Plan included phone numbers (including home, cell and pager number) of key VITA personnel from telecommunications, mainframe support, the Virginia Information Provider's Network (VIPNet) and the Customer Care Center (VCCC). VITA used the phrase, "National Election Incident," to identify a Critical incident requiring immediate attention. Both MCI and Verizon were placed "on alert" to ensure that the offices of the General Registrars remained connected. Ms. Piscicella also spent nearly 18 hours on site at SBE on Election Day and took point on resolving technical issues.
- ▶ On October 4, 2004, the deadline for voter registration, our web site came to a standstill; we took almost 30,000 hits that day and, at one point, VITA advised us that we were at 200% of our bandwidth. VITA staff reviewed options and recommended that we move to the Department of General Services (DGS) Metropolitan Area Network to increase bandwidth to the server. VITA and DGS coordinated the move, which went flawlessly. SBE had no more bandwidth issues.
- ▶ When our web server started acting up, our Agency Information Technology Resource (AITR) called our ESD and asked if we could borrow a server as a back up. Within hours, our dedicated VITA resource,

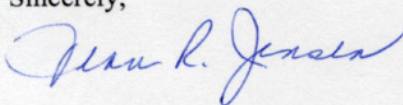


Richard Walls, had picked up a spare server; he then spent the weekend before the election loading the web site onto it and configuring software. While we did not have to use the back-up server, as the agency head, I was glad to know we had it, as an option, should the worst happen to our existing web server.

- ▶ The VCCC acted as our single point of contact after hours and on weekends for the four weeks leading up to the election. The VCCC immediately notified our AITR when any General Registrar logged a trouble call related to the Virginia Voter Registration System (VVRS). This allowed us to make decisions at the front end of a crisis rather than at the back end. While the AITR worked with a number of technicians at the VCCC, her most reliable contact was with Chris Schurman, an outstanding professional.
- ▶ On Election Day, we had two members of VITA's Security team (Rodney Rose and Neal Glock) monitoring our web site. Prior to Election Day, Rodney Rose conducted an on-site security audit. Jeff Deason and Don Kendrick both assisted our staff in identifying and mitigating security risks.

SBE could not have achieved a successful Election Day without the assistance provided by VITA. We depended on VITA for our information technology support and VITA, collectively, rose to the challenge. The services that agency provided SBE allowed my staff to focus on the business of holding a successful election. November 2, 2004 was an example of superb interagency cooperation due, in no small measure, to the incredible team of professionals at VITA.

Sincerely,



Jean R. Jensen

CC The Honorable Sandra Bowen, Secretary of Administration

The Honorable Eugene J. Huang, Secretary of Technology

Lemuel C. Stewart, Jr., Chief Information Officer, VITA